



Agriculture in Mansfield

A Presentation to the Town Council

September 27, 2010

Town of Mansfield Agriculture Committee

Town Commitment to Agriculture

The Town of Mansfield is committed to promoting agriculture:

- 2006 Plan of Conservation and Development
- Mansfield Strategic Plan



The Commonfields: Town-owned Agricultural Land

Agriculture Today in Mansfield

- Commercial Agriculture
 - Many different products
 - 34 retail outlets
 - Businesses supporting agricultural operations



Agriculture Today in Mansfield

□ Agricultural Products

- Dairy
- Livestock
- Hay



Mountain Dairy



Windhover Farm



Twin Ponds Farm

Agriculture Today in Mansfield

□ Agricultural Products

- Fruits and vegetables
- Maple Syrup
- Christmas trees
- Nursery stock



Bailey's Maple Syrup & Honey



Mt Hope Farm



Ledgecrest Greenhouses



Cedar Ledge Tree Farm

Agriculture Today in Mansfield

- Agricultural Retail Outlets
 - Farmers Market
 - Farm stands
 - CSAs (Community Supported Agriculture)
 - Nurseries



Eco Garden CSA



Storrs Farmers Market



Farm Stand at River Road



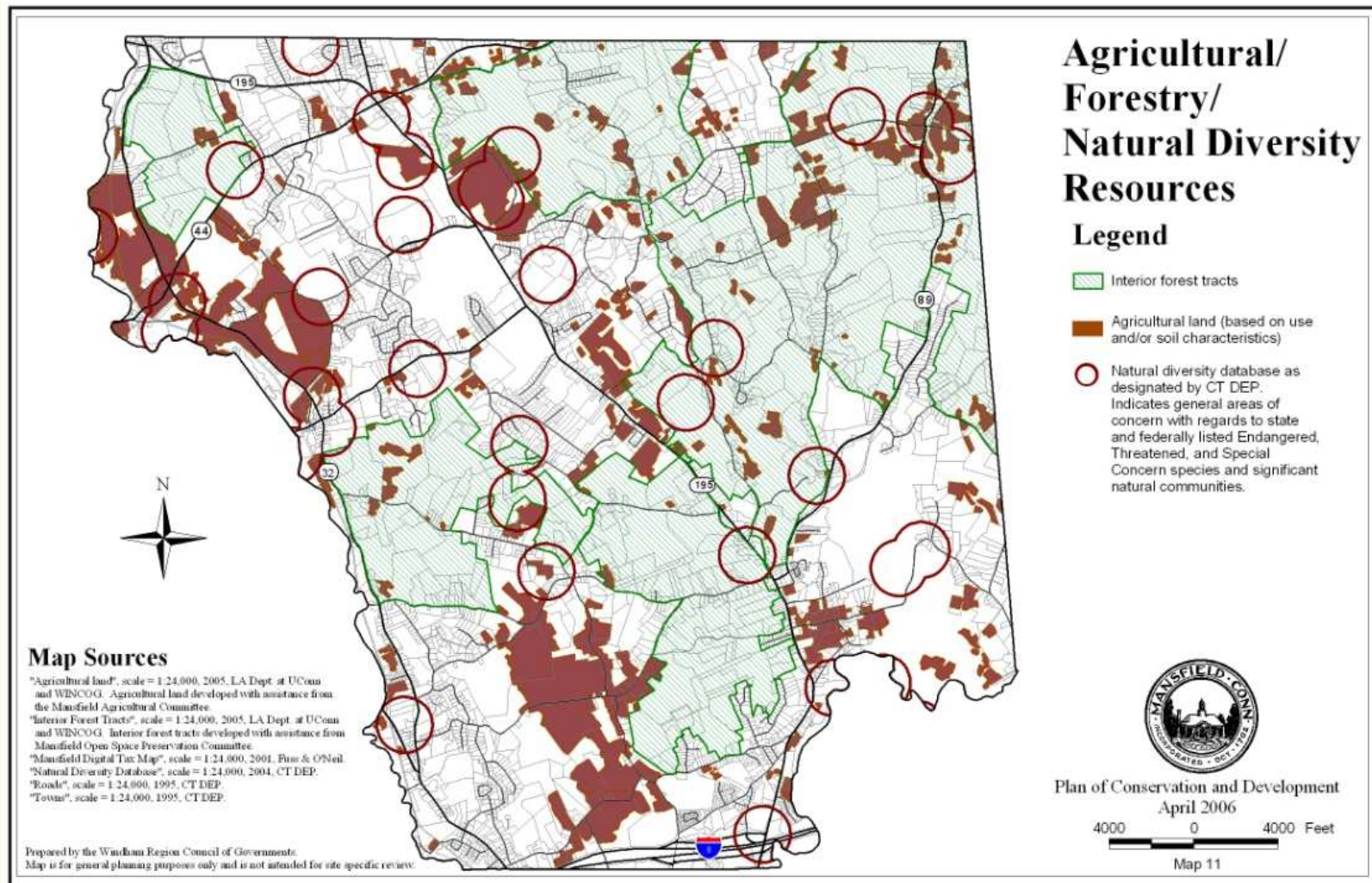
UConn Floraculture

Agriculture Today in Mansfield

- Private Agriculture
- Thriving Agriculture Education Program for All Ages



Farmland in Mansfield



Agriculture Today in the Region

- The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor is located within two hours of **11 million consumers**
 - ▣ Development pressure
 - ▣ Land use conflicts



Changing Agriculture in the Region

- 1991-2008: www.agcensus.gov
 - ▣ Average size of farm in CT has decreased
 - ▣ Number of farms has increased
 - ▣ 10 New Farms in Mansfield since 2000



Changing Agriculture in the Region

- Farm families have off-farm jobs
- Direct farm sales increasing
- Seasons are extended
- Diversified farms
 - High end/specialty products
 - Agritourism
 - Community supported agriculture (CSA)



The
Gardens
at
Bassetts
Bridge
Farm

Benefits of Agriculture in Mansfield

□ Quality of Life



Corn Maze at Merrow Farm

Benefits of Agriculture in Mansfield

□ Environmental



Crane Hill Field: Town-owned Agricultural Land

Benefits of Agriculture in Mansfield

□ Economic



Breezy Acres Percherons



Vegetable Production at Breezy Heights Farm

Challenges

- ❑ Farming offers low income and hard physical work.
- ❑ Average age of farmer is 58.3 years
- ❑ High land prices and taxes
- ❑ Declining profitability of dairy industry
- ❑ General public lacks understanding of realities of farming
- ❑ Land use regulations
- ❑ Potential for land use conflicts
- ❑ Farmland lost to residential development

How Can Mansfield Support Agriculture?

- ❑ Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)
- ❑ Zoning Regulations
- ❑ Subdivision Regulations
- ❑ Right-to-Farm Ordinances
- ❑ Tax Reduction Programs
- ❑ Encourage consumption of locally grown products



Foxfire Stables, LLC

How Can Mansfield Support Agriculture?

- Support Farmland Preservation
 - ▣ Fee Simple Purchase
 - ▣ Purchase of Development Rights
 - ▣ Agricultural Easements
- Encourage Agricultural Use of Town-Owned Farmland



Mansfield Community Garden

Mansfield Agriculture Committee

- Advisory to the Town Council and Town Officials
- Voice of agriculture in Mansfield

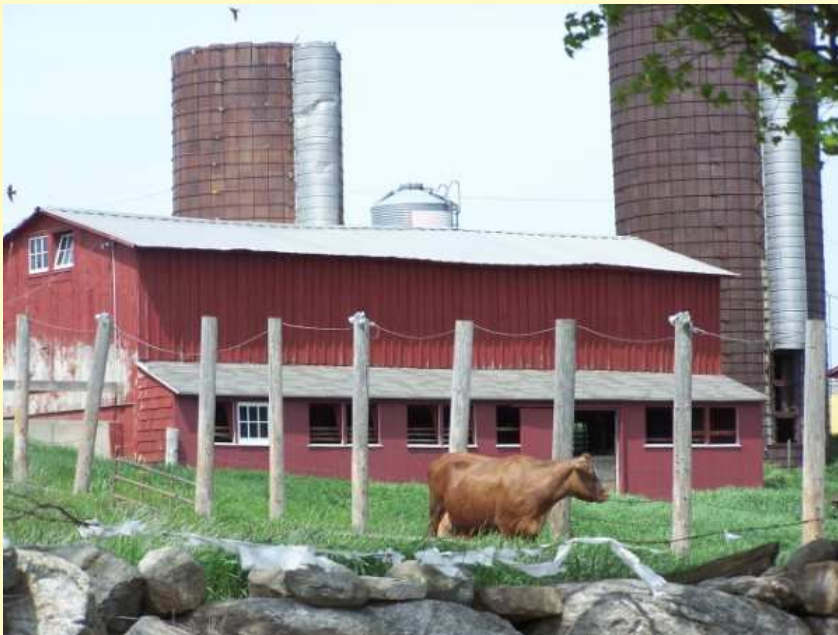


Agriculture Committee: On-going Efforts

- ▣ Provide input to PZC about:
 - POCD
 - Zoning Regulations to Advocate on behalf of Mansfield's farm families
 - Development proposals on or adjacent to prime farmland
- ▣ Prepare an analysis of Tax Reduction Programs to the Town Council
- ▣ Monitor farm-use agreements on Town land
- ▣ Prepare annual Agricultural Products and Services Brochure

Agriculture Committee: On-going Efforts

- Increase visibility of agriculture in Town
- Educate residents about active, working farms



Future Actions

- Promote understanding of and support for local farming
- Pursue farmland preservation
- Promote zoning that supports farm operations
- Promote youth agriculture programs



Future Actions

- Workshops for farmers
- Resources for farmers
- Regional initiatives
- TLGVFoodshed Plan



Farwell Barn UConn

Agricultural Viability in Mansfield

- To preserve farmland we must preserve FARMING
- A Shared Responsibility

